Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A charger comprising:

an electrode having a plurality of charging needles and which is a sheet-shaped electric conductor having a first plane including a straight line in an axial direction of an image carrier; and

an electrode cleaning mechanism contacting tip ends of the charging needles, and including a sheet section having a second plane arranged perpendicularly to the first plane of the electrode, and a holding member for holding the sheet section along an axial direction of an image carrier.

2. (Previously Presented) The charger according to claim 1, wherein

the sheet section changes in shape based on predetermined stress.

3. (Previously Presented) The charger according to claim 2, wherein

the sheet section comprises a film-like elastic sheet including a material selected from the group consisting of polyester, polyimide, and polyamide.

4. (Previously Presented) The charger according to claim 2, wherein the sheet section has a thickness of 10 to 100 μm.

5. (Previously Presented) The charger according to claim 2, wherein the sheet section has a thickness of 25 to 75 μm.

6. (Previously Presented) The charger according to claim 2, wherein an encroaching amount of the sheet section on the electrode is 0.1 to 1.5 mm.

7. (Previously Presented) The charger according to claim 2, wherein

an abrasive is applied to a surface of the sheet section.

8. (Previously Presented) The charger according to claim 2,

further comprising a holding plate capable of retaining the deposits removed from the electrode by the electrode cleaning mechanism.

9. (Canceled)

10. (Previously Presented) The charger according to claim 1, wherein

the second plane of the sheet section is vertical to the first plane, and deforms within a range of -90° to 90° with respect to a virtual plane which includes a virtual line vertical to an axis of the image carrier.

11. (Currently Amended) An image forming apparatus comprising:

an image carrier which holds a latent image and a developer image;

a charger including an electrode, an electrode cleaning mechanism and a moving mechanism,

the electrode having a plurality of charging needles and which is a sheet-shaped electric conductor having a first plane including a straight line in an axial direction of an image carrier,

the electrode cleaning mechanism contacting tip ends of the charging needles, and including a sheet section having a second plane arranged perpendicularly to the first plane of the electrode, and a holding member for holding the sheet section along an axial direction of an image carrier,[[,]]

the moving mechanism moving the electrode cleaning mechanism along the electrode;

a development device which supplies a developer to the image carrier to which the predetermined potential is supplied by the charger; and

a transfer device which transfers the developer image formed on the image carrier onto an output medium.

12. (Original) The image forming apparatus according to claim 11, wherein

the moving mechanism comprises a driving means, and operates the driving means when the number of output media becomes a predetermined number or more.

13. (Original) The image forming apparatus according to claim 12, wherein

the driving means is not operated while an image is being formed.

14. (Original) The image forming apparatus according to claim 11, wherein

the moving mechanism comprises the driving means, and operates the driving means with an instruction from a control panel.

15. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus according to claim 11, wherein

the sheet section changes in shape based on predetermined stress.

16. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus according to claim 12, wherein

the sheet section is a film-like elastic sheet including a material selected from the group consisting of polyester, polyimide, and polyamide.

17. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus according to claim 12, wherein

an abrasive is applied to a surface of the sheet section.

18. (Previously Presented) The image forming apparatus according to claim 12,

further comprising a holding plate capable of retaining the deposits removed from the electrode by the electrode cleaning mechanism.

19-38. (Canceled).